

working with my colleagues to ensure that this bill achieves our common shared goal of fostering a Palestinian government that is a full partner in achieving a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

HONORING RICHARD SHOEMAKER

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2006

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, this June will witness the retirement of Richard Shoemaker after an unusually illustrious career in the American labor movement.

He rose from an eighteen-year-old worker at John Deere in Illinois to serve three terms as vice-president of the United Auto Workers.

He rose up the ranks on the basis of his strong talents of mind and spirit. No matter what rung he was on, he never forgot where he started.

The result was an exceptional dedication to work for the well-being of his fellow and sister workers. He was proud that the labor movement, of which he was a vital part, was playing a key role in creating a strong middle class in America, one that gave workers a chance to obtain what many of their parents dreamed for their children to have, and which so many did not possess before the labor movement—a truly decent wage, decent health care, some security for their retirement, and educational opportunity for their children.

That was infused in his work as a President of his local at the age of 27, as an international representative appointed at the age of 30 by Walter Reuther, and in key administrative posts for UAW vice president Steve Yokich and President Owen Bieber.

He was called upon to tackle tough issues. Some years ago it was the effort to resolve a long conflict in labor management relations at Caterpillar.

Greater challenges still lay ahead. The American auto industry is now tackling perhaps the most dramatic challenges in its history. As vice-president of the UAW for GM and

Delphi, Dick Shoemaker is in the very center of the storm, using his deep talents, intelligence and experience to work toward answers that can sustain the domestic auto industry that he loves and helped build, while remaining faithful to the workers to whom he has dedicated his life's work.

Dick Shoemaker also learned early on the lesson that what goes on in the public sector and government can vitally affect any efforts and gains obtained in negotiations in the private sector. So he assumed a variety of major political responsibilities on behalf of the Union and in the Democratic Party. During these decades of unusual challenge, commitment, and achievement, Dick has been blessed by a wonderful partner, his wife Mary.

This Thursday, May 25, there will be a dinner held to give full tribute on his retirement to Dick Shoemaker. Mr. Speaker, I speak not only for myself as an admirer and friend, but I know for many, many others who say to Dick Shoemaker—congratulations on an illustrious career leaving its major mark on many yesterdays, and for many tomorrows.